# *Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization*

## Tools for Liberation Packet

**for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers**

## 2005

**safehouse**
progressive alliance
for nonviolence

For more information or to schedule an anti-racism training for your organization,
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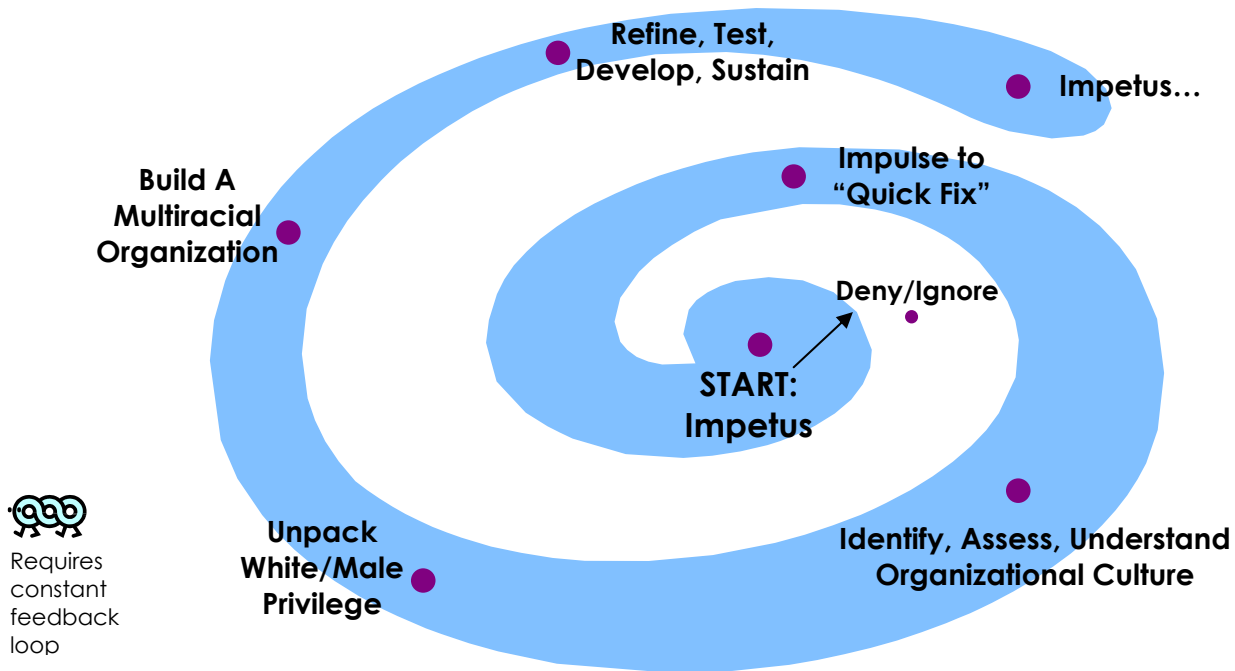www.safehousealliance.org

# Tools for Liberation Packet Contents

## Suggested Reading List – Just a Start!

- Race, Class, and Gender in the United States. Paula S.Rothenberg (ed). 6th Edition.Worth, 2004
- Living Chicana Theory. Carla Trujillo (ed). Third Woman Press,1998.
- Sister Outsider. Audre Lorde. The Crossing Press, 1984.
- Women, Race and Class. Angela Y. Davis. Vintage Books, 1983.
- Are Prisons Obsolete? Angela Y. Davis. Seven Stories Press, 2003.

# The Organizational Spiral

### Building Multi-Ethnic, Anti-Racist, Inclusive Organizations & Collaborations

**Refine, Test, Develop, Sustain**

**Impetus…**

**Impulse to "Quick Fix"**

**Build A Multiracial Organization**

**Deny/Ignore**

**START: Impetus**

Requires constant feedback loop

**Unpack White/Male Privilege**

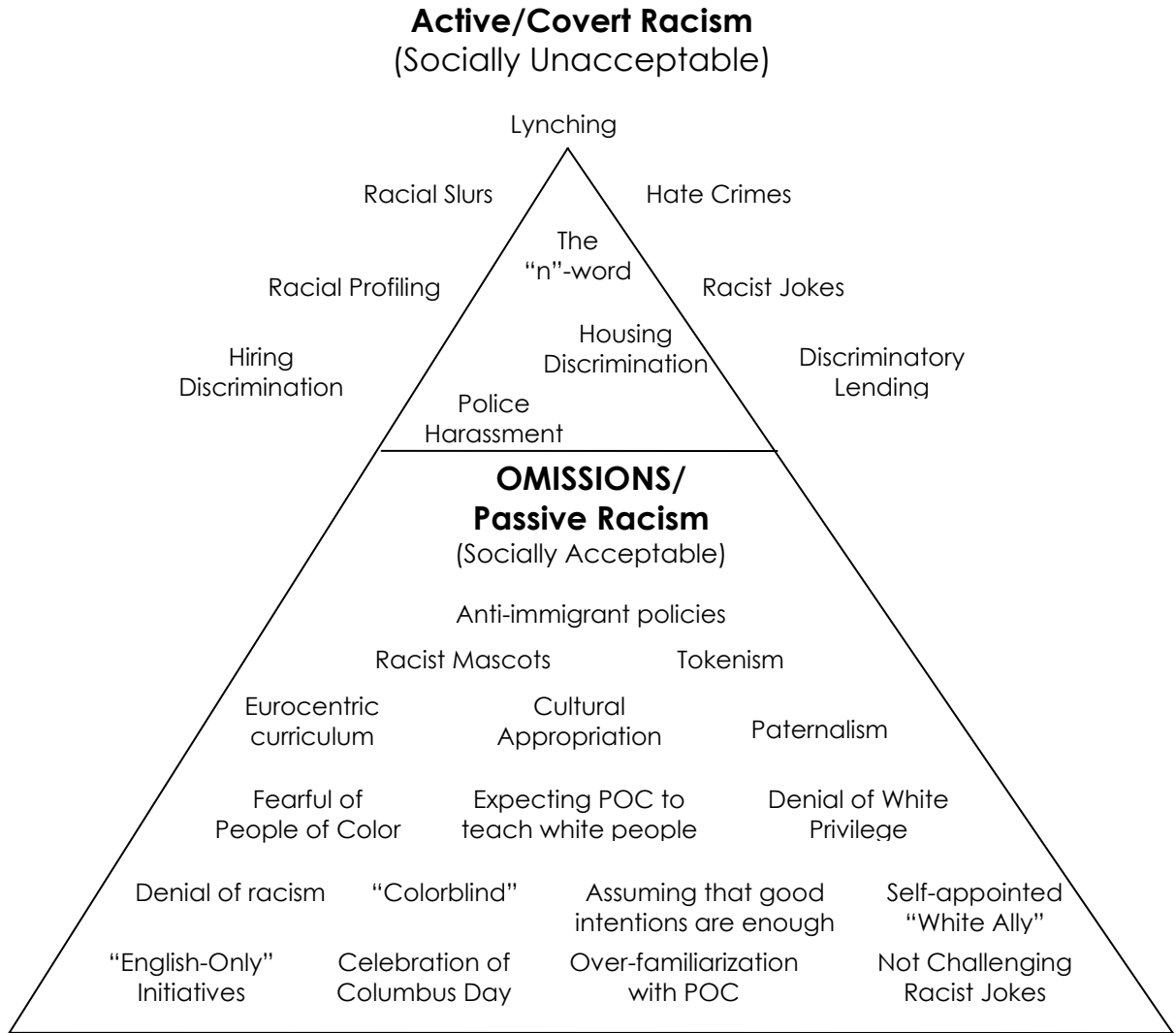**Identify, Assess, Understand Organizational Culture**

Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Non-Violence (SPAN) historically was a white feminist organization that has gone and continues to go through a transformational process to become a more inclusive antiracist and multiracial organization. This illustration is an attempt to outline the complex path SPAN continues to travel.

# The Usual Statements

Also known as "What people of color never want to hear again" from white people engaging in discussions about racism. The following are just a few statements commonly heard during anti-racism trainings. This list is not exhaustive but is meant to be used as a guideline for 'what not to say' for white people who are sincerely working on their white privilege.

1. I can't hear you if you are angry.

2. You're too sensitive.

3. I feel (unsafe, judged, attacked, abused, etc.)

4. I will only talk if everyone is respectful.

5. I'm a person of color too. Isn't 'white' a color?

6. I just see people, not skin color.

7. Why is there a caucus just for people of color? Isn't that separatism?

8. What about MY class/gender/religious/sexual orientation oppression as a white person?

9. Conversations about race are so divisive.

10. Talking about racism takes the focus off of (women's issues, the environment, classism, etc.)

11. When are we going to stop talking about racism and get to the *real* work??

12. I can't possible be racist because I am dating a person of color (or, because I adopted a transracial baby.)

13. That other person of color isn't offended, so why should you be?

14. Aren't you just <u>so</u> articulate!

15. We can't find any qualified women of color to join our workplace.

16. I come from the East Coast where people are much more inclusive.

17. I marched with Martin Luther King.

18. Other:

# ACTS & OMISSIONS

**Active/Covert Racism**
(Socially Unacceptable)

Lynching

Racial Slurs      Hate Crimes

The "n"-word

Racial Profiling      Racist Jokes

Housing Discrimination

Hiring Discrimination      Discriminatory Lending

Police Harassment

**OMISSIONS/
Passive Racism**
(Socially Acceptable)

Anti-immigrant policies

Racist Mascots      Tokenism

Eurocentric curriculum      Cultural Appropriation      Paternalism

Fearful of People of Color      Expecting POC to teach white people      Denial of White Privilege

Denial of racism      "Colorblind"      Assuming that good intentions are enough      Self-appointed "White Ally"

"English-Only" Initiatives      Celebration of Columbus Day      Over-familiarization with POC      Not Challenging Racist Jokes

# Anti-Racism Definitions From A Human Rights Framework
## DEFINITIONS

1. **Ally –** A member of a dominant group who works to dismantle oppression from which s/he benefits.
2. **Anti-racism** – The act of interrupting racism.
3. **Anti-Semitism –** A belief that Jewish people are an inferior race.
4. **Ascription –** Birth defines place in society.
5. **Assimilation** – Adopting the characteristics and values of the dominant group.
6. **Border Crossing –** Supports the unentitled rights of a person from outside a cultural community to act as a voice for that community and to appropriate knowledge without actual understanding of historical, political and ideological struggle. (Antonia Darder)
7. **Capitalism –** An economic system based on private ownership and control. Produces profits for individual rather than collective needs.
8. **Colonization**: The violent taking of land, wealth, labor of indigenous peoples through domination & conquest leading to their extermination & the Transatlantic slave trade which created a permanent underclass based on race and gender.
9. **Colorism** – Favoritism toward light-skinned people of color.
10. **Cultural Appropriation** – The taking of another group's cultural knowledge, traditions or practices to use for self-benefit. Objectifies and commodifies while ignoring the group's political struggles.
11. **Cultural Racism –** Cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed racial superiority of one group and the assumed racial inferiority of another group.
12. **Difference –** A spectrum of experience or characteristics that can be complimentary or conflicting. Often involves inequality of status and power.
13. **Discrimination** – Denial of opportunities. Different treatment. Granting advantages to one group while denying opportunities to another.
    - **Individual Discrimination** – perpetuated by an individual.
    - **Structural Discrimination** – perpetuated by an institution through tradition or custom.
    - **Organizational Discrimination** – perpetuated by individuals but reinforced by established rules, polices and practices.
14. **Eurocentric** – A perspective centered on a Western worldview that has become intrinsic to the American cultural identity.
15. **Genocide –** Any policy of extermination of a people through institutional acts of killing culture, identity, and the people themselves.
    - **Direct genocide -** physical killing or slow death measures.
    - **Cultural genocide -** destroys the institutions and identities of the group.
16. **Heterosexism –** A system of advantage based on sexual orientation.
17. **Homophobia** – Fear based on heterosexual values.
18. **Honor Systems** – Rank certain qualities above others. Benefits are conferred, not earned.
19. **Hypodescent** a.k.a. "one-drop rule" – Any racial mixture constitutes racial impurity. Categorized as a non-white person and relegated to a subordinate group.
20. **Inequality –** Unequal power relationship.
    - **Temporary Inequality** – Temporary power-over relationship. Socially defined superior and inferior groups. Superior group has responsibility to "raise up" inferior group and to eventually end the relationship of inequity.

- **Permanent Inequality** – Permanent power-over relationship. Superiors enforce inequity and do not help inferiors. No goal to end inequality.
21. **Institutional Racism –** A system of advantage based on race rooted in and reinforced by cultural, political, economic and educational foundations. Never accidental.
22. **Internalized Oppression** – Internalized belief of racial inferiority about own racial group.
23. **Internalized Sexism** – Internalized belief of gender inferiority based on gender.
24. **Intersectionality** – The intersection where multiple forms of oppression come together.
25. **Intra-racism–**Internalized racism played-out among different racial communities of color.
26. **Jim Crow –** The system of legalized racial segregation.
27. **Legal Fiction -** The act of inventing made-up law by policy-makers to achieve a political purpose. The political invention is given real legal meaning and enforcement through the passage of it into law.
28. **Misogyny –** A hatred of women.
29. **Nativism**– a policy of favoring native inhabitants over immigrants
30. **Oppression** – A relationship that exists between groups where dominates benefit at the expense of subordinates reinforced by a system of social inequity.
31. **Patriarchy –** A belief that men are superior to women. Culture is male dominated, centered, and identified.
32. **Passing** – An attempt by non-whites with light-skinned privilege to skirt the discrimination barriers imposed by law and custom by attempting to "pass" for white.
33. **Prejudice** – A preconceived belief usually based on limited information.
34. **Race** – An ever evolving social, legal and political construct that has no basis in biological fact.
35. **Racial Stereotypes** – Preconceived notions based on assumptions of racial superiority and inferiority.
36. **Racialization** – The extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified concept, group or practice.
37. **Racialized Privilege** – The granting of privileges based on preferred racial identity.
38. **Racism** – A system of advantage based on race.
39. **Reverse Racism** – A disputed concept. Discrimination (a denial of opportunity) by subordinates against dominants.
40. **Sexism** – A system of advantage based on gender.
41. **Social Power –** Access to social, cultural, and economic resources and decisionmaking.
42. **System** – Combines social power, institutional power (policies & practices), cultural messages, and individual actions.
43. **White Privilege** – An unacknowledged system of favoritism and advantage granted to white people as the beneficiaries of historical conquest. Benefits include preferential treatment, exemption from group oppression and immunity from perpetuating social inequity.
44. **White Supremacy** – A system of exploitation to maintain wealth, power and white privilege.
45. **Whiteness** – A racial identity created by upper-class colonialists to distinguish themselves from indentured servants and slaves. A guarantee against being enslaved.

Race, Class, and Gender in the United States. Paula S.Rothenberg (ed). 6th Edition.Worth, 2004
Living Chicana Theory. Carla Trujillo (ed). Third Woman Press,1998.

# Characteristics of Dominants and Subordinates

Oppression: a relationship that exists between groups where dominants benefit at the expense of subordinates.

| Characteristics of Dominants | Characteristics of Subordinates |
|---|---|
| * Make and enforce the rules | * Rendered invisible – voices are invalidated or silenced |
| * Have resources to make and enforce the rules | * Internalized unworthiness |
| * Define the roles of the subordinates | * Know more about dominants than vice versa |
| * Experience is normative – create the model for 'normal human relationships' and standards for 'professional conduct' | * Experience Internalized Oppression – internalized belief of racial inferiority about our own racial group.  Includes "colorism", favoritism toward light-skinned people of color |
| * Have access to resources – money, power – to make rules | * Experiences are not included into the social, political, legal or educational discourses |
| * Think they're where they are by merit | * Must concentrate on survival, become targets |
| * Create myths or stereotypes of worthiness – determines who's valuable and who's not | * Penalized for speaking out → emotional or physical toll, so pay the cost or opt out |
| * Control systems: education, political, religious, economic | * Denied self-determination |
| * Define the measures of intelligence and create standards | * System results in identity-confusion |
| * Reserve highly valued roles for themselves and guard them | |
| * Are able to impede the success of subordinates – laws, hiring practices, etc. | |
| * Legitimizes inequality & incorporates it into the fabric of society | |
| * Defines morality | |
| * Defines what it means to be 'patriotic' | |
| * Conflict avoidant; don't want to talk about inequality and don't recognize that inequality breeds conflict | |

Source: Race, Class, and Gender in the United States. Paula S. Rothenberg (ed). 6th Edition. Worth, 2004

# The Intersectionality of Oppression

**Intersectionality**: The point where experiences of oppression collide.

- **Racism:** A system of advantage based on race.  The subordination of people of color by white people.
- **Sexism**: A system of advantage based on gender. The subordination of women by men.
- **Heterosexism**: A system of advantage based on sexual orientation. The subordination of GLBTQ-Two Spirited by heterosexuals.
- **Ableism:** A system of advantage based on physical/mental ability. The subordination of people with disabilities by people without disabilities.
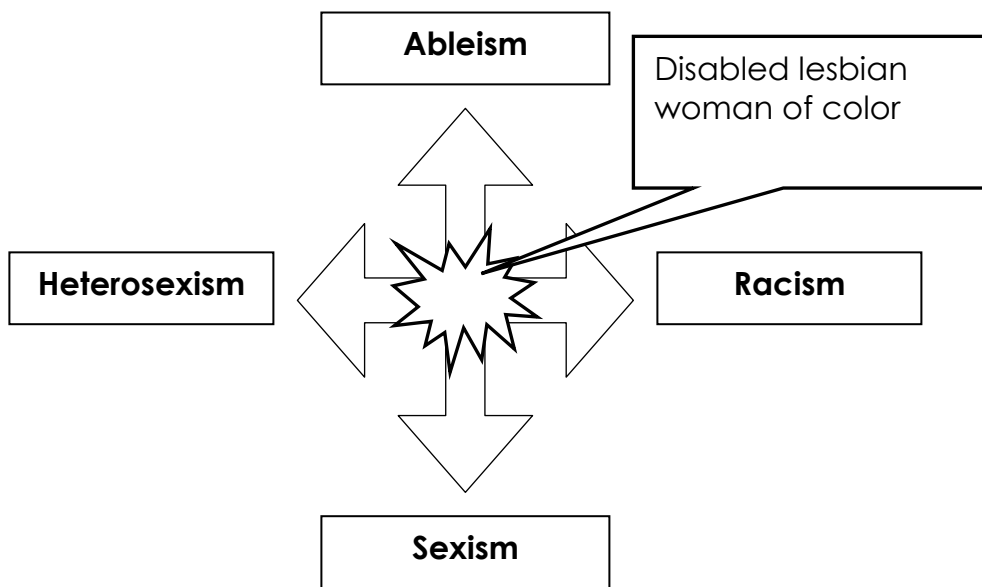


**Parallels between Racism & Sexism:**
- Both are learned
- Perpetuated by stereotypes
- Both involve acts of systemic coercion
- Both involve subordinates & dominants
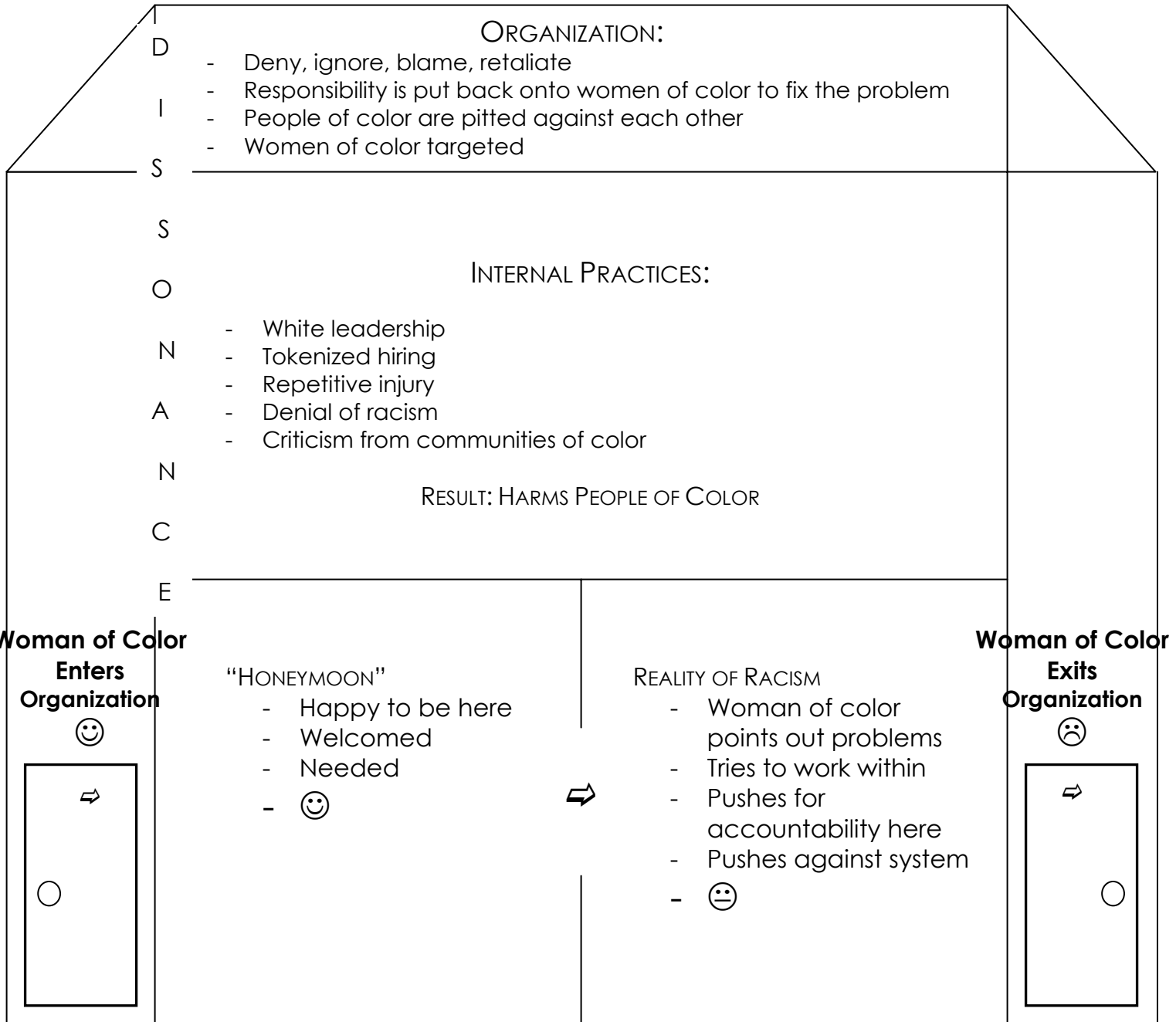- Both may culminate in violence

**Women do not suffer under patriarchy equally**. Factors include:
- Race, Class, Job Availability, Age, Access to Resources, Sexual Orientation, etc.

Williams, Kimberlé Crenshaw. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color". In: Martha Albertson Fineman, Rixanne Mykitiuk, Eds. The Public Nature of Private Violence. (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 93-118.

# A Chronicle of "The Problem Woman of Color" in a Non-Profit

PURPOSE Of Organization: To Help Others

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ORGANIZATION:
- Deny, ignore, blame, retaliate
- Responsibility is put back onto women of color to fix the problem
- People of color are pitted against each other
- Women of color targeted

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INTERNAL PRACTICES:

- White leadership
- Tokenized hiring
- Repetitive injury
- Denial of racism
- Criticism from communities of color

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RESULT: HARMS PEOPLE OF COLOR

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**Woman of Color Enters Organization** ☺

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"HONEYMOON"
- Happy to be here
- Welcomed
- Needed
- ☺

⇨

REALITY OF RACISM
- Woman of color points out problems
- Tries to work within
- Pushes for accountability here
- Pushes against system
- 😐

**Woman of Color Exits Organization** ☹

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FOUNDATION: Problem becomes Woman of Color
INSTITUTIONAL RACISM REDEFINED:
"Communication Issue" "Not a Good Fit" "Not Qualified" "Personnel Issue"

# Characteristics of Highly Inclusive Organizations

*Summary of The Denver Foundation's Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative*
Prepared by Katherine Pease and Associates

## Research

210 completed survey or 30% response rate out of 700 organizations in Metro Denver with budgets of $500,000 and over surveyed.

–How inclusive are organizations?
–How interested are nonprofits in becoming more inclusive?
–What are the best practices and barriers to inclusiveness?

## Characteristics

o Highly inclusive organizations are diverse organizations with large numbers of people of color, <u>AND</u>
o Highly Inclusive organizations also incorporate …
  – positive environment for all–programs planned and implemented with awareness of cultural nuances
  – communications with cultural sensitivity
  – internal systems bridge cultural gaps

## Why is inclusiveness important?

o U.S. and Metro Denver are increasingly diverse
o Business imperative for corporations
o Mission imperative for nonprofits
o ***Race, ethnicity and culture <u>matter</u> when delivering services or doing advocacy***

## Findings

Metro Denver nonprofit sector: generally inclusive, with the notable exception of Latinos.

- Latinos are underrepresented on staffs (13%) and boards of directors (7%) compared with their presence in the populace (17%).
- Approximately 25% of Metro Denver nonprofit boards have no people of color
  o 58% are designing a diversity strategy

## Barriers

<u>Most significant barrier</u>: perception that mission is not relevant to communities of color

  – "Color-blind" leadership: A one-size-fits-all approach does not foster inclusiveness
  – Failure to recognize board and staff prospects among volunteers and clients

# Characteristics of Highly Inclusive Organizations (cont')

**Implementation:** What are the best practices of inclusive nonprofits?

## Best Practice #1: A Committed CEO
*Most important element*: a CEO with a commitment to inclusiveness
1. CEOs of color and white CEOs can be equally effective
2. Most important function of board is to hire a CEO who is committed to inclusiveness and then support their efforts

## Best Practice #2: A Long-Term, Holistic Approach to Inclusiveness
- Inclusive practices must be integrated into:
  - Programs
  - Communications
  - Board/staff/volunteer recruitment
  - Culture and environment
  - Overall management practices
- Shot-gun approaches have neutral or negative effects

## Best Practice #3: Recognizing **All** of the Potential Contributions of People of Color
People of color can be valuable:
- Centers of knowledge about clients and services
- Financial contributors
- Volunteers and board members
- Staff members

## Best Practice #4: Recruiting and Retaining Staff of Color
1. Recruitment can be strengthened through creating consistent policies and practices to connect with communities of color; not enough to wait for applicants to come to you
2. Good management practices lead to retaining all staff, including staff of color
3. Normalizing performance review and professional development practices can equalize playing field

## Best Practice #5: Creating Inclusive Programs
1. *One Size Fits All:* No consideration of needs of diverse populations
2. *Specific to Communities of Color*: Developed specifically for needs of various populations
3. *Universal and Inclusive:* Designed for all clients with an awareness of different groups' needs
4. Organizations often transition through the three stages as they become more inclusive

## Best Practice #6: Two-way communications with communities of color
1. Organizations need to communicate about their work to communities of color
2. Also need to listen and learn from communities of color and ask for feedback, especially if help is needed overcoming major barriers

# Qualities of a "Committed CEO"

❖ Commit money, time for training and actively participates

❖ Willing to take risks & acknowledge privilege and power differentials

❖ Open to/seeks out feedback & integrates it

❖ Engages in a transparent decision-making process

❖ Hires People of Color "with politics"

❖ Willingness to change course if their way is not working

❖ Doesn't operate in a vacuum by being removed from everyday struggles

❖ Shares power while recognizing the hierarchy of responsibilities

❖ Effectively outreaches to diverse communities

❖ Is humble enough to admit "I was wrong" or "I take responsibility"

❖ Recognizes when injury is caused and works to repair the damage

❖ Implements a clear conflict resolution process and models it

❖ Is an ally in anti-oppression work

# Qualities Of An Anti-Racist Ally

❖ Does something daily to earn the title of 'ally.' Recognizes that their "white ally badge" expires at the end of the day and must be renewed by a person of color.

❖ Title is not self-identified by white people but identified by people of color

❖ Understands that one person of color's white ally is not automatically another person of color's ally.

❖ Identifies and names racism directly.

❖ Takes the front line as a buffer; not as a 'savior.'

❖ Recognizes that remaining silent, "neutral" or "objective" can be a form of race privilege.

❖ Takes responsibility for self-education and doesn't expect POC to teach them.

❖ Cultivates genuine relationships with people of color that are mutually beneficial.

❖ Is hyper-vigilant about interrupting racism, but is not hyper-arrogant about being a "white ally."

❖ Struggles every day with understanding and undoing aspects of their own privilege.

❖ Works regularly to develop a deeper understanding of ongoing colonial relationships.

❖ Understands that people of color's experiences of racism is not debatable.

❖ Doesn't require people of color to display proof of racist injury.

❖ Knows that people of color are the experts of their own experiences.

❖ Acts in solidarity with people of color without taking over their liberation efforts.

❖ Doesn't expect gratitude from people of color, or to be recognized as a white ally.

❖ Takes on racism as a problem because it is *personally* offensive.

❖ Is motivated by a quest for justice, rather than a sense of guilt.

❖ Open to, and invites challenge. Expects support and accountability from other emerging allies.

❖ Unconditionally opposes oppression with no strings attached.

❖ Accepts that making mistakes is part of becoming an effective ally.

❖ Acknowledges, apologizes for, and learns from own mistakes without retreating.

❖ Interrupts racist statements or behaviors whether or not a person of color is present or objects.

❖ Participates respectfully in communities of color and avoids "cultural tourism."

❖ Is committed to social justice and an end to oppression in all its forms.